

Creating 100 Percent Tobacco-Free Schools in South Carolina



An Administrator's Guide to Policy Implementation

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Sponsored by:

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental
Control, Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control

South Carolina School Boards Association

South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative



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October 18, 2006

Each year, the South Carolina School Boards Association provides a *Policy and Legislative Update Book* highlighting significant education-related legislation and other informational items of interest to board members and district administrators, as well as recommended model policies for adoption and enforcement.

In August 2005, our organization, in collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control, endorsed the adoption of a revised model 100% tobacco free policy. The policy supports prohibiting the use and/or possession of all tobacco products or paraphernalia by all students, staff and visitors and includes, at the discretion of the board, enforcement procedures as well as language dealing with tobacco industry marketing or sponsorship. The goal is to provide a 100% tobacco-free campus - a smoke-free environment for all students, staff and visitors within all district facilities, vehicles, grounds, and at all district-sponsored events.

Recently, a significant piece of legislation, the Youth Access to Tobacco Prevention Act of 2006, makes it unlawful for a minor under age 18 to purchase, possess or attempt to possess any tobacco product and imposes possible fines and/or consequences for this activity on the part of a minor. With the passing of this new law, school districts should review their tobacco-related policies to consider strengthening them.

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INEZ MOORE TENENBAUM
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August 30, 2006

Dear School Administrator:

According to the 2005 South Carolina Youth Tobacco Survey, 33.6 percent of high school students, and 16.8 percent of middle school students use some form of tobacco. The survey further reports that 9.6 percent of high school students and 3.0 percent of middle school students smoked on school property during the thirty days preceding the survey, and that most students begin smoking before age eleven. Our state statistics far exceed the national averages. While we are making strides to reduce the toll of tobacco use on our state's young people, much work is left to be done. The need to adopt and enforce a 100 percent tobacco-free policy is imperative if a healthy and safe environment is to be provided for the youth within our schools.

This letter is to encourage all school districts to adopt the 100% Model Tobacco-Free School Policy that has been endorsed by the South Carolina School Boards Association and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. The model policy prohibits use and/or possession of all tobacco products or paraphernalia including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, and snuff by all students, staff, and visitors within all district facilities, vehicles, grounds, and at all district-sponsored events.

We encourage school administrators and educators to utilize this booklet to review and enhance their policies, and/or move toward adopting new ones to reflect being 100 percent tobacco-free. Many thanks to the school districts that have already adopted 100 percent tobacco-free policies. It is our sincere hope that all school districts will make the decision to protect and promote the health of our children and become 100 percent tobacco free.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Inez".

Inez M. Tenenbaum
State Superintendent of Education
State Department of Education

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Earl Hunter".

C. Earl Hunter
Commissioner
Department of Health & Environmental
Control

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Tobacco-free Schools

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction (2000)*. Because four out of five people who use tobacco begin before they reach adulthood, tobacco prevention activities should focus on school-age children and adolescents. Evidence suggests that school health programs to prevent tobacco use can be an effective means of preventing tobacco use among youth and can accomplish one of the six National Education Goals. Of seven guidelines recommended to prevent tobacco use among youth, the first guideline focuses on schools prohibiting tobacco use by students, staff, parents and visitors on district grounds, in any facility or vehicle and at all district-sponsored events. The other guidelines include K-12 prevention education, classroom instruction, cessation support, and involvement of parents or families in supporting programs.

The South Carolina Clean Indoor Air Act of 1990 and the Pro-Children Act of 1994 prohibit smoking in any form in all indoor public elementary and secondary schools including preschools, day care centers, library facilities, head start programs and certain healthcare facilities. The local school board has the discretion to make the entire district, including outdoor facilities, smoke-free.



Reasons for schools adopting 100 percent tobacco-free policies include the following:

- Schools are responsible for protecting children in their charge from dangerous products. **FACT: Tobacco is a product that disables and kills.**
- Schools must prohibit drug use in school buildings, on school grounds and at school sponsored events. **FACT: Tobacco is a drug.**
- Schools must promote health rather than enable addictions. **FACT: Tobacco is addictive.**
- Schools are responsible for providing a safe environment for students. **FACT: Smoking materials and secondhand smoke are dangerous.**
- Schools can help “delay the onset” of smoking and significantly reduce the chances that youth will use tobacco regularly. **FACT: 90 percent of people who smoke start before the age of 18.**
- Schools must send clear, consistent non-use messages. **FACT: Allowing tobacco use at school conflicts with prevention messages delivered in the classroom.**
- Schools can promote not smoking as the social norm. **FACT: Perceived social acceptance of tobacco use influences adolescent tobacco use behavior.**
- It is import that schools model respect for state laws and community ordinances. **FACT: Laws intentionally limit access and possession of tobacco by children.**
- School districts would be wise to protect themselves from liability risks. **FACT: Schools may face liability issues by allowing smoking on their premises.**

The South Carolina School Boards Association, in collaboration with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control, endorses the adoption of policies that address preventing tobacco use within schools to include, at the discretion of the board, enforcement procedures as well as language dealing with tobacco industry marketing or sponsorship.

Local district action required: Districts may amend their existing policies or adopt new policy language to include the above-discussed issues. A model policy is included here for consideration by boards. All or part of the language may be appropriate for the district in reconsidering its approach to this issue. Any language used needs to be reflected in the personnel and student policies as well.

Policy references: ADC (Tobacco-Free Schools). GBED (Tobacco-Free Schools/Staff No Smoking/Smoking). JICG (Tobacco Use by Students).



Tobacco-Free Schools Policy

A comprehensive tobacco policy may be expressed in simple terms such as:
District policies prohibit all tobacco use (including smokeless tobacco) on all school property and at all school sponsored events and functions on or off campus, by all people (including students, employees, visitors, contractors, delivery drivers, etc.). Students shall receive age-appropriate instruction about tobacco prevention. District policies prohibit tobacco industry marketing and sponsorship and also prohibit exhibition of tobacco-related gear or paraphernalia.

However simple, most statements do not include any single state or federal law. State statutes say that smoking is prohibited inside all public schools (SC ST SEC 44-95-20). Federal law (Pro-Children Act of 1994, 20 USC 6082) says that smoking is prohibited by anyone – youth or adult – inside any facilities serving children but does not regulate outside the building. The only way a district can ensure that all protections are offered is to adopt a comprehensive local policy. The following is the model tobacco-free school policy that has been recommended by the South Carolina School Boards Association and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control for adoption and enforcement in S.C. schools.

MODEL TOBACCO-FREE POLICY FOR SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS

Code **ADC** Issued **MODEL/05**

Purpose

To establish the basic structure for tobacco-free schools.

The board believes that tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke (environmental tobacco smoke) are hazardous to the health of human beings, especially children. Therefore, the board affirms that one of the best methods of instruction is one that is provided within a 100 percent tobacco-free environment.

Goal

The goal of this policy is to provide a 100 percent tobacco-free, smoke-free environment for all students, staff and visitors within all district facilities, vehicles and grounds and at all district-sponsored events by doing the following.

- Exhibiting healthy behavior for all students, staff, visitors and the entire community;
- Utilizing proven and effective science-based tobacco use prevention curricula; and
- Providing access to cessation counseling or referral services for all students and staff.

Procedures

- Prohibit the use and/or possession of all tobacco products or paraphernalia including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco and snuff by all students, staff and visitors
- Ensure that tobacco use prevention programs, as recommended by the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, the S.C. Department of Alcohol and

Other Drug Abuse Services and the S.C. Department of Education, are an integral part of district substance abuse prevention efforts.

- Provide and/or refer to cessation services for students and staff.
- Ensure that violations of the S.C. Youth Access to Tobacco Prevention Act of 2006 are communicated to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Enforcement

The district will enforce this policy by determining appropriate disciplinary actions for violators (students, faculty, visitors) such as the following:

Students

- Parent/legal guardian/administrator conferences
- Mandatory enrollment in a tobacco prevention education
- Community service
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Suspension from extracurricular activities

Staff

- Verbal reprimands
- Written notification placed in personnel file
- Suspension
- Mandatory enrollment in a tobacco education program
- Voluntary enrollment in a cessation program



Visitors

- Verbal requests to leave school property
- Forfeiture of any fee charged for admission
- Prosecution for disorderly conduct after repeated offenses

Education and assistance

The district will be responsible for utilizing proven and effective tobacco use prevention curricula to educate all students and providing assistance and/or making appropriate cessation referrals.

Tobacco industry marketing or sponsorship

The district (*option: will/may*) not accept any contributions or gifts, money or materials from the tobacco industry. The district (*option: may/will*) not participate in any type of services that are funded by the tobacco industry. In addition, any gear, paraphernalia, clothing, etc., that advertises tobacco use or tobacco products will not be allowed on district grounds or in the possession of faculty, staff or students at district-sponsored events.

Cf. GBED, JICG

Adopted ^

Legal references:

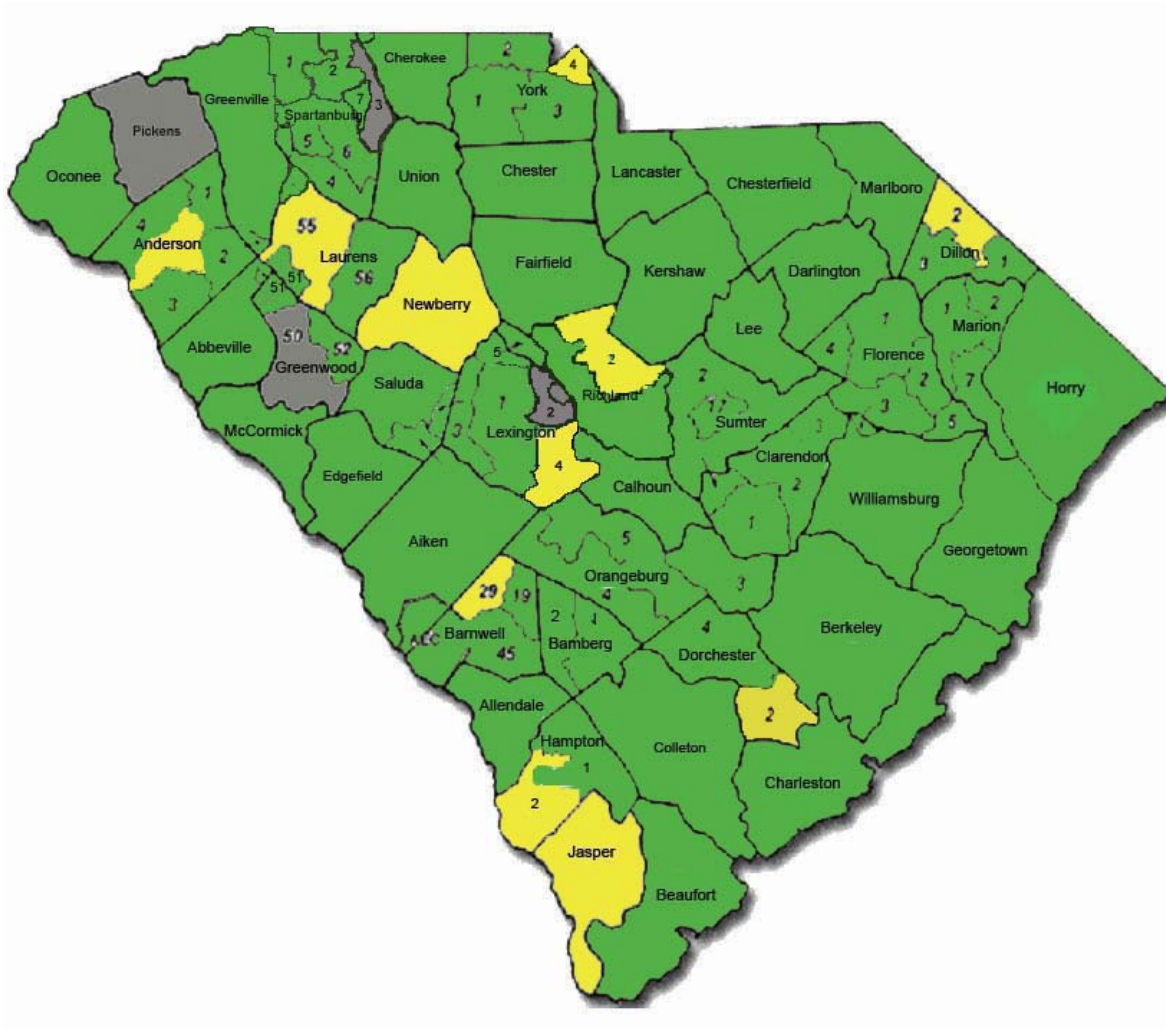
A. United States Code:

1. 20 U.S.C. 6081 - Pro-Children Act of 1994.

B. S.C. Code, 1976, as amended:

1. Section 44-95-10, et seq. - Clean Indoor Air Act of 1990 and penalties for violations.
2. Section 16-17-490 - Contributing to the delinquency of a minor (school board rules and regulations may be exempt under certain circumstances).
3. Section 16-17-500 - Supplying minors with tobacco or cigarettes.
4. Section 59-67-150 - Qualifications of bus driver; drinking or smoking on bus.

“Blazin’ the Way” **South Carolina School Districts Adopting Model Tobacco-Free Policy**



School Districts That Adopted Model Tobacco-Free Policy

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Anderson School District Five | Lexington School District Four |
| Dillon School District Two | School District of Newberry County |
| Dorchester School District Two | Richland School District Two |
| Fort Mill School District Four | Williston-Elko School District 29 |
| Hampton School District Two | |
| Jasper County School District | |
| Laurens School District 55 | |

School Districts One Step Away from Adopting Model Tobacco-Free Policy

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Greenwood School District 50 | Spartanburg School District Three |
| Lexington School District Two | Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School |
| School District of Pickens County | |

School Districts Without Model Tobacco-Free Policy

Policy Implementation

Implementing a new policy can be challenging and will require some planning strategies in order to be effective for enforcement. Consider establishing a committee to assist in the implementation of the new policy and possibly use some of the following strategies:

- Develop an implementation timeline. Leave adequate time for community input and school board review.
- Inform students, staff and community about the new policy well in advance of the implementation date.
- Plan appropriate education and cessation support programs, communication strategies, and enforcement procedures.
- Identify enforcement strategies for students, staff and the public.
- Develop a system for complaints about violations of the policy.
- Decide who will be responsible for enforcing the policy and assign specific responsibilities to specific individuals.
- Emphasize the need for firm, consistent enforcement within all segments of the school community.
- Emphasize proactive communication strategies that are clear and consistent.
- Enforce the policy with a positive approach.
- Recognize that tobacco use may be the result of an addiction.

Policy Communication

In order to help your school district effectively implement and enforce a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy, it is very important that the policy be communicated to all members of the school and the community. While this might be done several different ways, here are a few strategies that other 100 percent tobacco-free school districts have employed:

In-service Training

This is a training that should be held at your school district for school and community representatives, which may include principals, assistant principals, teachers, community and media relations staff, school resource officers, student leaders, school nurses, law enforcement officials and others deemed appropriate for your respective school district. There should not be a cost associated with the training or any necessary materials.

When the in-service is held, it is recommended that representatives from the S.C. School Boards Association as well as the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control Division of Tobacco Prevention and Control, be in attendance to support overall policy and training efforts. Other potential representatives might include:

- S.C. Department of Education Healthy Schools Initiative
- S.C. Department of Drugs, Alcohol and other Substances
- S.C. Tobacco Collaborative
- American Cancer Society – Southeast Division

During the training, communicate the:

1. Agreed upon model school policy for adoption and enforcement;
2. Expectations of all students, staff, parents, and community;
3. Rationale supporting the decision to become 100 percent tobacco-free;
4. Policy enforcement guidelines and problem solving techniques;
5. Quitting referrals and resources;
6. Positive statements; and
7. Appropriate signage and language supporting overall efforts.

Knowing how to effectively communicate your policy will go a long way toward relieving associated stress school staff may have regarding enforcement and will help to avoid negative confrontations with parents, workers and other school visitors.

Tobacco policy implementation can be challenging, and without effective communication, the policy will be unenforceable. To help in this effort, we have provided a range of communication ideas and strategies to ensure that all members of the school and community – students, staff and visitors – are aware of the policy, understand the rationale behind it, and are clear on the consequences if the policy is violated. No matter what stage your district is in – just getting started, implementing, or dealing with enforcement issues – experience shows that communication must be clear, ongoing, and consistent. We encourage you to work with members of your school and community to identify the best strategies for your school district.

Checklists for Communicating a 100 Percent Tobacco-Free Policy

Students' Checklist

- ✓ Post prominently placed tobacco-free school signs at all entrances to school buildings, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and in school and activity buses.
- ✓ Place details in student handbooks and orientation guides.
- ✓ Review and discuss policy at student orientation meetings including meetings with new and transfer students.
- ✓ Spread the information through student organizations, activities and newspapers.
- ✓ Make announcements over morning broadcasts at school and over loudspeaker systems at school events.
- ✓ Have students design posters, banners, and signs to communicate the new policy and provide information about how students can access these programs.
- ✓ Involve student groups or clubs to assist in communicating the policy – such as Rage Against the Haze (RAGE), Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU) and Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT).
- ✓ Encourage, support and empower students to appropriately confront other students and visitors who are violating the policy.
- ✓ Include information in student newspaper articles and on school Web sites including those that target students.

Employees' Checklist

- ✓ Post prominently placed tobacco-free school signs at all entrances to school buildings, school grounds, parking lots, athletic facilities, and on vehicles.
- ✓ Provide every school district employee with a copy of the policy and a letter of explanation from the school board.
- ✓ Discuss the policy at staff meetings and new staff orientation.
- ✓ Hold in-service training on tobacco-related school policies for all staff, including teaching staff, bus drivers, aids, food service workers and maintenance staff.
- ✓ Post information, along with a copy of the policy, in staff lounges or offices.
- ✓ Include information in staff newsletters.
- ✓ Tell staff about opportunities for tobacco cessation support programs in the community and provide information regarding how staff can access these programs.
- ✓ Inform potential employees of the policy in all job interviews. Include a statement that the school district is tobacco-free on all job applications.
- ✓ Involve respected and well-liked school personnel in sharing messages with staff groups.

Parents/Guardians' Checklist

- ✓ Provide information at parent open houses at the start of the new school year.
- ✓ Post prominently placed tobacco-free school signs at all entrances to school buildings, school grounds, parking lots, and athletic facilities.
- ✓ Send a letter to each parent or guardian that: 1) explains the policy change; 2) provides the health, academic and social reasons for the change; 3) outlines the consequences for violators; and 4) asks for support in enforcement.
- ✓ Ask parents to sign student-school contracts that address the tobacco policy for participation in extra- and co-curricular activities.
- ✓ Discuss the policy changes at PTA, PTO or similar meetings.
- ✓ Include an article outlining the policy and implications of the policy in parent-oriented newsletters and school or community newspapers.
- ✓ Announce the new policy at all athletic events, meetings, concerts and plays. Have students develop and/or deliver announcements.
- ✓ Send a letter home or call parents if a student violates the policy.

Public/Community's Checklist

- ✓ Place an ad in the paper thanking the school board for its decision to make the school district 100 percent tobacco-free.
- ✓ Ask other community groups such as the S.C. Tobacco Collaborative, local coalitions, PTAs, and PTOs to include an article about the new tobacco-free school policy in their newsletters. (Provide them with a short article, if necessary).
- ✓ Post prominently placed tobacco-free school signs at all entrances to school buildings, school grounds, parking lots, and athletic facilities. Other places to post signs include gathering places, restrooms, loading areas, and stairwells.
- ✓ Remove all ashtrays from school property, especially those outside the entrances to school buildings.
- ✓ Announce the new policy at all athletic events, meetings, concerts and plays. Include announcements in event bulletins.
- ✓ Train students, staff and community volunteers to politely ask community members to respect school policy. Avoid communicating in a way that sounds judgmental or that would create or escalate conflict.
- ✓ Ask students, staff, and community volunteers to assist in distributing informational flyers regarding the policy at school events.
- ✓ Communicate the policy to parent and business volunteers who assist in supervising youth during off-campus activities, including field trips, job shadowing or community service.
- ✓ Inform vendors who provide supplies, materials and services on a regular basis to the school about the policy. Use an official memo, face-to-face communications or include a clause in the written contract agreement.



School Sponsored Event Announcements

School sponsored athletic events are an opportunity for students, staff and community members to have fun, celebrate student athleticism and enjoy the excitement of competition – not be exposed to secondhand smoke or examples of tobacco use. We encourage school district staff to use these events to remind students, staff and school supporters that the district has a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy in place – one that prohibits tobacco use anywhere on campus, at anytime, by anyone. Regular announcements at football, soccer, baseball and other athletic events are a simple and effective strategy for getting the message across, especially when used in combination with signage and information in event brochures.

Sample Announcements

Effective Use of Announcements

Advocates and school staff provide the following suggestions for using announcements to effectively communicate a tobacco-free school policy:

- ✓ **Positive, pro-health announcement:** Announcements should be positive – reminding visitors that the policy exists to protect the health of students.
- ✓ **At least four announcements:** Provide at least four announcements – at the beginning of the game, end of the first quarter, half-time, and end of the third quarter – to ensure everyone is aware of the policy.
- ✓ **Youth participation:** Invite youth groups such as Rage Against the Haze (RAGE), Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU) or Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) teams to create and make the announcements.
- ✓ **Support the announcements:** Have prominently displayed signs and messages in event brochures that reinforce the announcements.

The following are sample announcements you can modify and use at your school sponsored athletic events:

- **15 seconds:** *For the safety of our students, (Name of school district) is proud to have a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy. At this time, we would like to remind our home fans and visitors that the use of any tobacco products during tonight's sporting event is strictly prohibited. We appreciate your support and would like to thank you for keeping our school and stadium tobacco-free. Enjoy the game!*
- **15 seconds:** *Did you know that more than 1,000 nonsmokers in South Carolina will die this year due to exposure to secondhand smoke? This is one reason why all (name of school district) schools are 100 percent tobacco-free. We remind our visitors and fans that smoking or chewing tobacco is prohibited on school grounds – including in and around the stadium. Thank you for your support and enjoy the game.*
- **15 seconds:** *Nearly 8,100 South Carolina kids under 18 become new smokers each year. That is one reason why (name of school district) schools have a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy. Tobacco use of any kind is strictly prohibited on all school property – including in and around the stadium. Thank you for your support and for helping us help our students be tobacco-free.*

- **15 seconds:** Tobacco kills more than 1,200 Americans every day. Eighty percent of them started smoking before they were 18. This is one reason why (name of school district) schools are 100 percent tobacco-free. We would like to remind our visitors and fans that tobacco use of any kind during tonight's game is prohibited. Thank you for your support and enjoy the game.
- **30 seconds:** Hey fans! Did you know that tobacco use is the number one cause of preventable death in South Carolina? Every year more than 7,000 people in our state die from the use of tobacco products – more than those who die from AIDS, alcohol, traffic accidents, illegal drugs, murder and suicide combined. This is one reason why (name of school district) schools are 100 percent tobacco-free. This means no tobacco use anytime, by anyone, anywhere on campus – including stadiums. We appreciate your support and thank you for keeping our school and stadium tobacco-free. Enjoy the game!

Even with signs, written materials, and event announcements, some school visitors may not realize that the school district has a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy in place. This is why all school staff should be trained to communicate the policy one-on-one to the public. Gentle, positive and clear messages will let violators know that the policy is in place and that it will be enforced. Knowing how to effectively communicate the policy will go a long way toward relieving stress school staff may have regarding enforcement and will help to avoid negative confrontations with parents, workers and other school visitors.

The following are some tips for verbally communicating the policy:

Gentle reminders: Chances are, the person in violation of the policy is unaware that it is in place. This is particularly true if your school district recently adopted the policy. Politely and firmly let the violator know that the campus – as well as the entire school district – is now 100 percent tobacco-free.

A rationale for the policy: Inform violators of the reasons for the policy in a positive manner. Let them know the school board enacted the policy to protect students, school staff, and visitors from secondhand smoke, to ensure a safe learning and work environment for students and staff, and to model healthy and positive behaviors for students.

Range of communication strategies: Make sure that other communication strategies are in place to support verbal messages. For example, visitors to outdoor athletic events should see signs and information in event programs that communicate the policy, as well as hear announcements at the start of the game and between quarters that remind them of the policy.

A process for consistent violators: Have a plan in place in the unlikely event that school visitors will not comply with requests to refrain from tobacco use while on campus. An example would be a school supporter at an outdoor athletic event who refuses to stop smoking.

- **First Violation:** Inform the visitor of the policy (using a phrase below).
- **Second violation:** Inform the visitor of the policy again. Suggest that they leave campus if they want to smoke. Let them know that they will be asked to leave stadium if they continue to violate the policy.
- **Third violation:** Ask law enforcement personnel at the stadium to escort the visitor off campus.

Sample Statements

Here are some positive ways to communicate the tobacco-free policy:

- “Pardon me, you must not realize that our school district now has a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy in place – this means no tobacco use anywhere on campus, at anytime, by anyone. Our school board passed the policy in (date here) to protect students, staff and school visitors from secondhand smoke and to create a healthy and positive environment for students. We ask that everyone comply with the policy. Thank you for your cooperation.”
- “I’m sorry, but I must ask you to comply with our school district’s 100 percent tobacco-free school policy by putting out your cigarette. The aim of our policy is to protect our students, staff, and school visitors from secondhand smoke, and to role model healthy behavior for all students. Thank you for your cooperation.”
- “Excuse me, I must ask you to put away your chewing tobacco. We have a 100 percent tobacco-free school policy in place on our campus. We ask that everyone – including staff and visitors – refrain from using any tobacco products until they leave the campus. I appreciate your cooperation.”
- “Excuse me, I must ask you to refrain from smoking while on campus. Last (month here), our school board enacted a district-wide 100 percent tobacco-free school policy. This means no tobacco use anywhere on campus, by anyone, at any time. This policy is designed to ensure a positive and healthy environment learning and working environment for students. Thank you for your cooperation.”



Resources

This booklet was adapted from North Carolina's *Teaming Up for Tobacco Free Schools* initiative and Oregon's *School Tobacco Policies*. For more information, visit

www.nctobaccofree.schools.com

<http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/tools.shtml>

Read the S.C. School Boards Association's Policy and Legislative Updates and find sample tobacco-free school district policies from throughout the state at **www.scsba.org**.

Learn about current youth smoking rates, tobacco use data and find out the latest programs approved to meet requirements of the Youth Access to Tobacco Use Prevention Act at **www.scdhec.gov/tobacco**.

Visit **www.smokefreesc.org** to find coalitions in your area that can assist with developing and implementing tobacco-free policies.

For information on South Carolina's youth movement against tobacco use, visit **www.rageagainstthehaze.com**.

For additional factsheets, materials and toolkits on tobacco use prevention, visit **www.cdc.gov/tobacco**.

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